

THE UMBILICAL CORD METHOD

Nearly all clients I see that have a puppy, are frustrated with puppy toilet training. The client lets their puppy outside to go the bathroom and all he does is play outside. Then within 10 minutes of coming back inside, the puppy goes to the bathroom on the floor. He then gets scolded, which negatively affects the relationship between puppy and owner.

WHAT YOU NEED A comfortable collar, a six foot long leash and a dog crate. The puppy owner should already be familiar with crate training. If not, plenty of information on crate training is available through books and the Internet.

HOW IT WORKS The puppy needs to be outfitted with a comfortable collar and six foot long leash. When the puppy is in the house, the collar and leash are on “at all times” and the owner is attached to the other end of the leash. This means attaching the leash to your belt while you are brushing your teeth, peeling potatoes, watching TV, etc. This stops any unsupervised puppy activity in the house. The pet can no longer wander away to “soil” in the house without the owner knowing. The owner will now pick up on clues that the puppy needs to go out. If the puppy cries, circles and sniffs the floor, it is a signal to take him outside. Better yet, take the puppy out first thing in the morning, last thing at night and every two hours in between. At night, the puppy stays in a crate. After one week, DO NOT TAKE the puppy outside in the middle of the night.

When the puppy is taken outside, he must remain on the leash. Walk to the same spot in the backyard and do nothing to stimulate the puppy until he goes to the bathroom. Stand there for 10 minutes (very boring) if need be. When the puppy does go to the bathroom, he’s given three small treats (*Benny Bully Liver Treats* are an excellent choice) and told, “What

a good puppy”. Give lots of praise. The puppy is then treated to some playtime outside (10 minutes is great). The sequence of events is extremely important; bathroom first, then treats and praise and then playtime. If the puppy is allowed to play first and then taken into the house as soon as he goes to the bathroom, the puppy learns to “hold it” so as to prolong playtime. When the puppy goes back into the house, he is allowed 20 minutes off the leash because we now know that his bladder and colon are empty. It is really important to put the puppy back on leash after 20 minutes. Repeat this event every 2 hours. If however, the puppy does not go to the bathroom when taken outside, he goes back into the house on the leash (no treats, praise or playtime) and retry in 30 minutes.

If you cannot keep the puppy on the end of the leash (ie; you need to have a shower, you are sleeping or are at work), put the puppy in a crate. Except at nighttime, the puppy should not be in the crate for longer than 4 hours at a time. It is possible that for the first week or so the puppy may soil in his crate. Not to worry, no action is needed on the owners’ part. The puppy will quickly figure out not to go to the bathroom in his crate.

If your puppy does have an accident in the house, it is usually because the owner forgot to have the puppy on the leash or in his crate. Any accidents are to be ignored and the owner must remember to keep the puppy on the leash or in the crate. If the puppy is “caught” going to the bathroom in the house, do not yell at him. It will only teach him not to go to the bathroom in front of you. Simply pick him up, take him outside to the appropriate spot and give him plenty of praise and some treats when he goes outside.

The success to having a confident, happy and well trained puppy is having a routine (even on week-ends) and consistency. Make sure everyone at home follows the same rules when training your puppy.



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